THE Reconstructionist

Vol. X. May 12, 1944 Iyar 19, 5704 No. 7

EDITORIALS
- *Defeat Versus Defeatism*
- *Anti-Semitism in the Polish Army*
- *Reconstructing Yiddishkeit*

ZIONISM FOR JEWS OR FOR JUDAISM?
By Jack J. Cohen

THE JEWISH COMMUNITY AND THE SERVICEMAN
By Jacob M. Ott

BOOK NOTES
By Myer S. Kripke

MUSIC NOTES
By Judith K. Eisenstein

REALITIES AND VALUES

RECONSTRUCTIONISM IN THIS ISSUE

Dedicated to the advancement of Judaism as a religious civilization, to the upbuilding of Israel's ancient homeland, and to the furtherance of universal freedom, justice and peace.

the Reconstructionist

is published bi-weekly for twenty consecutive issues, starting in October, by the Jewish Reconstructionist Foundation, Inc., 15 West 86th Street, New York 24, N. Y. Reentered as second class matter October 3, 1935, at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879.

EDITORIAL BOARD

Chairman: Mordecai M. Kaplan

Associate Chairman: Ira Eisenstein

Managing Editor: Eugene Kohn

Associate Editors: Israel S. Chipkin, Samuel Dinin, Abraham G. Duker, Judith K. Eisenstein, Theodore Friedman, Solomon Goldman, Jacob S. Golub, Bernard Heller, Philip Houtz, Samuel C. Kohs, Milton R. Konvitz, Theodore N. Lewis, Milton Steinberg.

Contributing Editors: Michael Alper, Nathan A. Barack, Shlomo Bardin, Morton M. Berman, Philip S. Bernstein, Asher Block, Samuel M. Blumenfield, Ben-Zion Bokser, William J. Boxerman, Mortimer J. Cohen, Miriam R. Ephraim, Harry Essrig, Emanuel Gamoran, Judah I. Goldin, Robert Gordis, Emanuel Green, Max Kadushin, Louis M. Levitsky, Joshua Loth Liebman, I. D. Minzberg, Edward T. Sandrow, Simon Shetzer, Joshua Trachtenberg, Leo Trepp, Jacob J. Weinstein, Max Wiener, Myer S. Kripke.

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

JACK J. COHEN is a rabbi, and is the Educational Director of the Cleveland Jewish Center, Cleveland, Ohio.

JACOB M. OTT is a chaplain in the United States Army.

MYER S. KRIPKE is the rabbi of Congregation Beth El, New London, Conn.

WITH ALL DUE MODESTY

From a subscriber in Philadelphia, Pa.:

Your "little" magazine is small only in size. In accomplishments, thoughts and achievements it is great. It is a privilege to be one of your readers. Keep up the good work that is sure to bring new meaning and strength to American Jewry.

From a subscriber in Los Angeles, Calif.:

I cannot refrain from stating how much good we derive from *The Reconstructionist*. So many of us in the past have approached Jewish problems from either an emotional or evasive point of view that the clarity and perception of your magazine is a truly fine and revealing intellectual experience.

From the University of Iowa:

. . . Particularly pleasing have been the virile and dynamic steps taken by the Reconstructionist Foundation to re-introduce an awakened appreciation of the inherent beauties and values in some of the customs and traditions of Jewish life. . . .

"WHAT IS TORAH?" makes use of the newer techniques of radio and stage. In it, choral speech and music are happily interwoven to create variety, intensity, and dramatic color. . . In the text, through the oft-recurring question, "What Is Torah?" the Torah is effectively presented in all its many facets as not merely a revered book, but as an emotion—a vision, a record of the evolution of Israel from a pastoral tribe to a civilized people preaching the highest ethical precepts. . . . Torah is a hope, a charter towards a better world. . . . We heartily recommend "What Is Torah?" Its text is dramatic and meaningful; its music is well chosen; and its approach is fresh."

—Harry Coopersmith in the Jewish Education Magazine

FOR A MEMORABLE CONFIRMATION SERVICE, A UNIQUE CEREMONY FOR RELIGIOUS SCHOOL EXERCISES, AN EXCITING PROGRAM FOR ANY PUBLIC MEETING,

present

''WHAT IS TORAH?''

By Ira and Judith K. Eisenstein

A cantata for unison chorus and piano, which, for twenty minutes, makes centuries of Jewish history come alive.

— — — — — *ORDER BLANK* — — — — — —

Jewish Reconstructionist Foundation,
15 West 86th St., New York 24, N. Y.

Please send me.....copies of the cantata "What Is Torah?" at $1.25 per copy.

Name .....

Address .....

.....

The Reconstructionist Prayer Book for the Sabbath has gone to the printer. Probable publication date is September, 1944. We are taking orders now!

THE
Reconstructionist

Vol. X. May 12, 1944 Iyar 19, 5704 No. 7

EDITORIALS

DEFEAT VERSUS DEFEATISM

A MONTH has passed since the day the White Paper went officially into effect. During this period, the signs have not been the happiest: a report in the press records that President Roosevelt and Winston Churchill have agreed that the Jewish Commonwealth is not to be considered favorably; the *Reader's Digest* publishes an article designed to create the impression that the Jews themselves will not want to go to Palestine; the oil interests have become a more dominant factor in the whole Near East situation. In all, Zionism has been forced into the defensive.

While the membership campaign of the Zionist Organization has apparently succeeded, the attitude of the "man on the street" has changed. Here and there one already hears words of disillusionment; fears are expressed that the Zionist movement has reached the end of its rope. These evidences of defeatism are today more dangerous to the cause of Israel's homeland than the many defeats upon the field of political negotiation. And the time is now to turn the full power of the Jewish press and pulpit upon those who permit defeat to reduce them to defeatism.

This is not the first time that Zionism has reached a seeming impasse. Since 1921, the *yishuv* has had to live through riots, royal commission reports and prophecies of imminent doom. More than once, the absorptive capacity of the land has been declared exhausted. More than once, the threat of Arab revolt has been held over the heads of Palestine Jewry and the Zionist organization. More than once, the "insuperable" obstacles to the successful fulfillment of the Zionist promise have been hurdled.

To be sure, there have always been fair-weather friends, and summer patriots, who have fallen by the wayside at the first evidence of hardship. But there have also been those valiant and dauntless believers whose steadfastness has never been shaken. It is vital to the cause, at this time, to inquire into the strange contrast between the easily shaken and unshakeable. What accounts for the difference?

Those who have lost heart have been those who have regarded Zionism as a worthy, a fairly practical, a quite humanitarian project designed to channel off refugees who might conceivably come to our shores if they did not go to Palestine. These half-hearted Zionists have been intrigued by the general notions about nationalism, by the glamour of quick and successful colonization, by the

oratory of eloquent Zionist spokesmen. But the true Zionists have been those who have understood that the Jewish people and Judaism are inconceivable without a Jewish land, who have sensed that the whole epic of Jewish history, Jewish wandering and suffering loses its meaning without the climactic fulfillment of an age-long aspiration. They know how puerile Jewish worship would be, with its cry for justice, if justice to the Jewish people were to be forever ruled out. They know how fatuous would be the prayer for peace while the war goes on against the Jewish people as a people.

The true Zionist sees in the establishment of the Jewish national home an index of the moral stature of mankind, and though they may fail to see, at the moment, the achievement of universal justice, they fight on and give their lives for it, neither despairing nor relenting. To become defeatist with regard to Jewish Palestine is for them identical with losing faith in mankind. Zionism for them is the modern equivalent of the messianic faith. It translates that religious conviction into terms of living experience.

Now is the time for the Jews of America to revive that faith. Without it, democracy and all that democracy connotes is a lost cause. With it, Zionism is once again redeemed from the devastating ravages of defeatism.

ANTI-SEMITISM IN THE POLISH ARMY

A BAD omen for the future of Poland after the war is the open manifestation of anti-Semitism in the Polish army. Jewish soldiers have been threatened and badgered by Polish officers. Some of these openly approved Hitler's treatment of the Jews and threatened to imitate it when, in a restored Poland, they would no longer be deterred by the restraining influence of the British, who are hosts to the Polish Government-in-exile. Jewish soldiers who "deserted" to join the British army have been court-martialed and sentenced to long prison terms.

Protests have been voiced in Parliament. The demand has been made that the sentence of the court martial be reviewed by the civil authorities. The Jewish Board of Deputies went further, urging the British government, so far without success, to permit Polish Jews to serve in the British rather than the Polish army, if they so requested. The Polish Government-in-exile has promised to review the sentences and to investigate anti-Semitism in the army, but it has not yet announced any punitive measures against the officers guilty of threatening the lives of Jewish soldiers.

On the eve of the invasion, such a situation in an army of the United Nations is alarming, to say the least. It constitutes a problem that must be of deep concern to all the nations fighting the Axis. It is a particular challenge to the Polish Government-in-exile and to its British hosts.

Shocking as the news is to the moral sensibilities of all decent people, it is not surprising in the light of Poland's record before the war. Pre-war Poland was a hotbed of anti-Semitic propaganda. Poland applied the methods of the "cold pogrom," the economic crushing of its Jewish population, even before Germany did. The theory that the Jews of Poland constituted a "surplus population" was openly avowed in government circles to justify oppressive measures designed to force Jews to emigrate.

Anti-Semitism in Poland has deep historic roots. Until comparatively recent times, Poland lacked an economic middle class, and the Polish nobility welcomed the settlement of Jews on their estates as their agents to extort money from the peasants. These same nobles would then extort that money from the Jews. Thus

the economic position of Polish Jewry was one that bred hatred of Jews in the peasantry and contempt of Jews in the nobility. After World War I, Poles sought a foothold in commerce, trade and handicraft in competition with Jews and were favored in all government services, while Jews were discriminated against in the professions, in education, in employment, and in the taxation policy of the country. The landed gentry, the class from which army officers are mainly drawn, sought to stave off revolt against their own oppressive monopoly of the country's natural resources by blaming the Jews for all the weaknesses of the Polish economy. The Church, too, being largely maintained by the privileged classes, was often a not very silent partner in their anti-Semitic propaganda.

Will Poland learn anything from the war? Will it realize that its own prosperity and security must depend on a national economy of maximum production in which all elements of the population are employed without discrimination, and the fruits of which all may share on the same terms? Or will its ruling class attempt to exploit scarcity value through land monopoly and the exclusion of Jews and other minorities from economic opportunity? There are evidences that, in certain sections of the Polish population, more fraternal relations between Poles and Jews have been established by the bond of common suffering and a common struggle for freedom. Jews have received help from the Polish underground in their self-defense in the Warsaw and other ghettos, and Jewish participation in the Polish underground movement has not gone unnoticed and unappreciated. Therefore, bad as the situation is, it is not hopeless.

Much has been said of the need for disinfecting the atmosphere of Axis Europe to destroy the germs of fascism that will remain after the war. The re-education of the German people has been proposed to this end. How about beginning now with disinfecting the sore spots in the ranks of the United Nations and immunizing them against the anti-Semitism bacillus which produces the dread disease? The Polish Government-in-exile would do well to reckon with this need, if it desires to retain the confidence and goodwill of its present allies. And the British Government, which heroically intervened, at the risk of its own nation's future, to preserve the Polish state from fascist aggression, owes it to the world to see that its own protégé does not become a fascist menace in the post-war world. It should bring the utmost pressure to bear on the Polish Government-in-exile to use drastic measures, if need be, to purge the Polish army and the Polish people of the anti-Semitic poison.

RECONSTRUCTING YIDDDISHKEIT

IN a recent issue of the *Yiddisher Kaemfer* there appears an interchange of lengthy letters between Chaim Greenberg, the editor of the journal, and Dr. A. Menes, former Bundist leader, on the theme, Religion and Judaism. Both men, highly esteemed as intellectual leaders in Yiddish speaking radical and labor Zionist circles, agree that secularist *Yiddishkeit* as once preached and practiced has lost its old appeal. In an age of world crisis, with the old centers of Jewish life and culture ruined, secularist versions of Judaism have proved too slight a base on which to ground the life of either the Jewish individual or group. Even the Yiddish secularist cannot find enough spiritual sustenance in the perusal of Yiddish *belles lettres.* In such circles, Dr. Menes notes a genuine yearning for some authentically Jewish mode of living, a thirst for spiritual values and practices. He echoes

Bialik's old eloquent appeal for a new *halakah*. There is need, he pleads, for a new code of *mitzvot*, one that would root the Jew in his own past and give tangible expression to the fundamental Jewish value of *kedushah* (sanctity). Though he is not prepared to accept the system of traditional *mitzvot* entirely, its wealth of historic association creates a natural bias in its favor. A process of selection and adaptation joined with an attitude that would create new *mitzvot* would deliver the Jew from that self-destroying individualism that has rendered him a stranger to the cosmos and to his own group. Thus far Dr. Menes.

Dr. Greenberg insists that an *aggada* (broadly speaking, a world view positing definite spiritual values) must logically precede the formulation of any *halakah*, old or new. Or how else establish the warrant for the performance of *mitzvot?* And if his correspondent seeks to imply that the perpetuation of the Jewish group is the end towards which the *mitzvot* are the means, then he is, in effect advocating for the Jewish people a form of nationalism which all democratic liberals will utterly reject. To do this would be to set up some kind of ideological alliance with the forces that have brought nothing but chaos to the world and to their own people. Should not one rather begin with the articulation of a universal religious philosophy? Nor need such necessarily be an original approach to the old problems that have exercised the mind of man since the dawn of speculative thinking. But, a new creative approach to the *mitzvot* demands at the very least a re-interpretation of the old traditional world view. In that case, however, how likely is one to win the assent of the masses to any spiritual interpretation of life? Without such ideological basis, acts of piety become a form void of meaning. Have not the acids of materialism and naturalism corroded the central nerve of religious life beyond hope of present repair?

If a preoccupation with these problems entitles one to enter into the discussion, Reconstructionists might well claim that right. We would begin by suggesting that the discussants consider some of the solutions Reconstructionism has been advancing for some time now. The reconstruction of Jewish ideology and the formulation of a guide to a mode of Jewish religious life are simultaneous processes. To debate which comes first sounds dangerously like the ancient chicken and egg controversy. We would remind Dr. Greenberg, by way of example, that the observance of the Sabbath, even according to the Biblical account, antedated the Ten Commandments. Historically, the latter provided a new and superior rationale to what was, from the dim beginnings of ancient Israel, a well established institution. That rationale in turn influenced the manner in which the Sabbath was observed. To assign priority to the working out of a philosophy is to confuse the province of religious culture with that of speculative thinking. Judaism can tolerate and indeed has tolerated varieties of spiritual philosophy. Philosophies, we Reconstructionists have been insisting, are individual and their claim to universality has no more been recognized in fact than have similar claims by the proponents of historic religions. Finally, we agree in rejecting nationalism as an ultimate value. The group is of value insofar as it encourages, promotes and elicits the best in the individual and enables him to make his maximum contribution to the life of mankind.

Whether they are aware of it or not, both writers are engaged in the basic process of reconstructing Judaism. It is, with all humility, gratifying to discover to what extent their method and tentative conclusions already coincide with what

we have been preaching. Further discussion can, we feel, bring them only closer to the Reconstructionist viewpoint.

REALITIES AND VALUES

IN MATTERS CONCERNING inter-racial relations, Mayor LaGuardia of New York is usually on the side of the angels. But he certainly fell from grace in his recent opposition to the relocation of Japanese-American evacuées in New York. It is sad enough that, in the initial stage of the war, when we were all stunned by the blow at Pearl Harbor and feared a possible spy in every Japanese however innocent, all of that race who lived on the Western sea-board were compelled to leave their homes and be interned somewhere in the interior of the country. Since then we have had time to investigate the interned Japanese individually and to endeavor to integrate those of them who have been proved to be loyal into the American community by relocating them where they could be usefully and happily employed. But this good work is being frustrated by a cruel prejudice against them on racial grounds. The mayor's opposition to their settlement in New York gives encouragement to that racial prejudice. We therefore associate ourselves heartily with the protest against Mayor LaGuardia's stand which has been voiced by the Federal Council of Churches and other church organizations.

▼

A DELEGATION OF PROTESTANT churchmen recently presented to Secretary of State Cordell Hull a plea that the government exert its influence to insure religious freedom throughout the world. The delegation included Dr. Samuel McCrea Cavert, of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ; Dr. Glenn P. Reed, of the Foreign Missions Conference of North America, and Dr. O. Frederick Nolde, of the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Philadelphia. As reported by Religious News Service, the delegation defined religious liberty to mean "freedom to worship according to conscience and to bring up children in the faith of their parents; freedom for the individual to change his religion; freedom to preach, educate, publish, and carry on missionary activities; and freedom to organize with others and to acquire and hold property for these purposes." We think that is a fair definition, and we wish to stress one of its implications: that the "freedom . . . to carry on missionary activities" must not be invoked to justify violation of the "freedom . . . to bring up children in the faith of their fathers." Christian denminations conducting missionary activities among Jews have frequently sought to bring Jewish children into Christian missions without the knowledge and against the will of the parents. That practice now stands condemned by all those churches who would associate themselves with the plea for religious freedom.

▼

THE WEEK OF MAY 7-14 HAS been designated as National Family Week. A committee consisting of the Rev. Harry C. Munro, director of adult work of the International Council of Religious Education, the Rev. Edgar Schmiedeler, secretary of the Catholic Conference on Family Life, and Rabbi Ahron Opher, representing the Synagogue Council of America, has arranged for its observance by churches and synagogues throughout the country. It was designed especially to help the nation bear the strains to which family life is necessarily subject in time of war. For the family is the basic unit of our society on which its morale depends at all times. For us Jews, National Family Week should stress the need to counteract those influences making for the deterioration of family life to which the Jewish people are particularly exposed.

Since most Jews are city-dwellers, the individualism of an urban economy, the commercialization and consequent vulgarization of social entertainment, the very rapidity of life's tempo—all militate against a wholesome and sanctified home life, even in time of peace. Add to these the assimilationist tendency to discard the distinctive mores, religious symbols and observances of the traditional Jewish home, and the danger of deterioration in Jewish family life becomes obvious. We cannot in our day reproduce the Jewish home of the past in all its forms. We must modify the ancient *mitzvot* associated with the home and create new ones in the same spirit of consecration. The Reconstructionist movement, through its religious Fellowship and through the preparation of devotional literature for the home endeavors to do that. It is too early to boast of achievements, but at least we are grappling with the problem.

▼

THE HEBREW UNIVERSITY continues to make magnificent contributions to human progress. Word reaches our shores that Dr. Baruch Levin reports that a new method has been devised in the University's laboratories by which crude penicilin can be produced within an hour instead of the ten days that the present method requires. This remarkable advance will, of course, be a boon to the medical corps of the armed forces of the United Nations. Let us hope that evidences like this of the creative potentialities of the *yishuv* will influence the powers that be to make their decisions regarding Palestine in the light of human welfare rather than in the light of momentary expediency.

▼

WE HAVE LONG CONTENDED that Jewish life can be revitalized best through the creative arts, music, drama, painting and the dance. The thrill of a beautiful performance can not be replaced by a hundred arguments. It is, therefore with gratification that we take note of the playwriting contest recently concluded under the auspices of the B'nai B'rith youth organization, Aleph Zadik Aleph. The prize winners, Charles Becker, Rabbi Louis I. Newman and Private Harold Franklin, are to be congratulated. These plays will undoubtedly be published; but we suggest that the plays of several of the runners-up should also appear. Jewish life is so much in need of dramatic material that writers ought to be encouraged—even though they have not won places in the contest. In addition, these plays should go out to the armed forces. Chaplains would certainly welcome an opportunity to present Jewish life on the stage, as well as from the pulpit of the chapel.

▼

THE NEW ANGLO-JEWISH Publishers Association deserves a hearty welcome into the world, not only for having been born, but equally for the fine resolution which was voted at the initial sessions in Indianapolis. The publishers resolved to establish a rigid code of ethics and to maintain a high standard of journalism. All we can say, sadly, is: we sure need it! The press is a powerful force, and in Jewish life can be a mighty influence for good. If publishers and editors will think of themselves as crusaders, and as the gadflies of the community, and think a bit less of the gossip column and the advertiser, Jewish journalism will rise to the heights it should occupy. Incidentally, we hope that one of the first projects of the Association will be the establishment, on a cooperative basis, of an Anglo-Jewish daily. There is a crying need for at least one such newspaper in this vast country of ours.

Zionism for Jews or for Judaism?

JACK J. COHEN

NO one can deny the fact that the need of the hour, as far as we Jews are concerned, is the saving of as many of our brethren as possible from the hands of Hitler. To ask our leaders, therefore, to reconsider seriously the ideological foundation of the Zionist movement at this moment appears to be an uncalled-for attempt to becloud the issues and divert our attention from the immediate and pressing task before us. But since we Zionists criticize alternative programs of rescue which fail to assign a prominent place to Palestine as being illogical, we must make sure of the logical validity of our own line of argument.

The Current Zionist Line

The truth of the matter is that the current rationale of Zionism is in certain respects shaky, and is therefore unpersuasive. There are two main reasons cited by General Zionists, in behalf of the movement. The first is that Zionism will serve as a means of controlling, ameliorating, or even abolishing, anti-Semitism. The second states that Zionism will normalize Jewish life. The two are intimately connected and supplement one another, but neither can bear the brunt of criticism without serious qualification.

To the average Zionist, it is almost axiomatic that Zionism is a solution to the problem of anti-Semitism. Let us examine this theory, the seeds of which were planted in the classical period of Hess, Smolenskin, Pinsker, etc. We Jews are scattered throughout the world with no roots anywhere. This very homelessness becomes, at one and the same time, both a cause of anti-Semitism and the chief reason why it cannot be abolished. Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver recently stated that "anti-Semitism is after all only the effect of what ails the Jewish people." The homelessness of the Jewish people generates anti-Semitism, in the first place, because by virtue of our ubiquitous and unrooted existence, we are looked upon as a strange ghost-like folk who are to be feared. Hatred is the next psychological step. In the second place, our "homelessness" contributes fuel to the fire of anti-Semitism because the weakness of a homeless people renders it a fitting scapegoat for all social ills.

Moreover, once having given rise to anti-Semitism, our continued dispersion prevents our doing anything to abolish it. Anti-Semites proceed undisturbed spreading their dread disease, since there is no state to which Jews can turn for diplomatic protection. If we had Palestine, we could then exert pressure on foreign governments by threats of political and economic action to their disadvantage. We could also, in a more affirmative way, gain international respect by the square dealing of the Jewish government in economic and political relationships with other countries. In one stroke, says present-day Zionist theory, both a cause of anti-Semitism and a deterrent to its abolition could be removed.

Before analyzing the fallacies in this reasoning, let us summarize the second current ideological basis for Zionism, for it is more or less a corollary of the first. Zionism, it is said, will normalize Jewish life. In the words of Rabbi Silver, "Not that all Jews should return to Palestine any more than that all Englishmen living in all parts of the world should return to England, or all Frenchmen to France, or all Germans to Germany. But there is an England, a France and a Germany. So must there be a land of Israel in order

that the status of the Jewish people might be normalized throughout the world. Politically the Jewish people must become, like every other people, possessed of an independent life in a national home." Again says Rabbi Silver, "And the loss of it (our national home) has been the source of nearly all the tragedies and sufferings of our people these two thousand years. It is the lack of a national center which makes us so anomalous and so different from other people, and which makes our position so insecure in the world." Acquisition of a homeland will remove from us the stigma of being a people without a country. We shall have a source of diplomatic strength. We shall cease to be an enigma amongst the nations of the world.

Will Zionism Cure Anti-Semitism?

To what extent are these arguments sound? Will the return of a Jewish state help to ameliorate anti-Semitism? It is to be admitted that the existence of political representation for the Jewish people will provide us with a better instrument than we now possess for the protection of our rights throughout the world. But this hope ought not to be counted upon to too great an extent. After all, has the existence of Oriental states helped to secure the yellow race fair treatment on American soil? The traditional anti-Jepanese and anti-Chinese feeling on the west coast and the official refusal of the U. S. Government to grant rights of immigration to Orientals (now with the exception of the Chinese) are conclusive proof of the fact that the mere existence of a home state does not guarantee equality or even tolerance for its nationals or their descendants abroad. Does anyone in his right mind assume that anti-Negro feeling in the U. S. will disappear merely because a Negro state exists somewhere in Africa? Anti-Semitism, like other manifestations of bigotry and oppression, is involved in the economic, social, psychological and political dislocations of the world and its abatement and ultimate abolition are dependent on the degree to which these dislocations are corrected. We have no intention of stooping to the self-centered opportunism of most world powers. Yet in the existing state of international relations, that is the only way in which Jewish diplomacy could help to enforce Jewish requests for justice. If we want to maintain our ethical idealism we must be prepared to fight for the slow improvement of the world's conscience. Zionism may possibly contribute to such a realization, but only as part of a wave of liberalism.

However, it is even problematic whether anti-Semitism is an effect of Jewish homelessness. When the Second Commonwealth was still in existence, Jew-hatred grew and spread in the pagan world. The attack of Antiochus was not merely an invasion of Palestine by a powerful enemy, but was accompanied by the type of propaganda against the Jewish people which is characteristic of modern anti-Semitism. In Hellenistic Alexandria, hostility to Jews germinated despite the existence of a Jewish homeland. No one can gainsay the fact that the lack of a powerful state has prevented Jews from defending themselves successfully against their enemies, but only one who is blind to the facts can say that anti-Semitism arose as a result of Jewish homelessnss or that mere reconstitution of the commonwealth will materially help those Jews who remain in the Diaspora. We Jews have always been a mystery to the peoples of the world, but it is not our homelessness which has made us such. We were once called atheists because we had a God who could not be seen. We were thought to be lazy because we rested on the Sabbath. We are still misunderstood because we refuse to assimilate. We are still hated because of our ideals. No, it is not our

homelessness which has made us an anomaly. Maurice Samuel was much closer to the truth when he credited us with being the originators of ideals which the world has swallowed but not digested. And what is more, we are capable of creating more ideals of this type. We are doing so today in Palestine.

It is, therefore, even conceivable that Zionism may increase anti-Semitism. If we empty Europe of Jews, a not too far-fetched possibility, anti-Semitism will naturally vanish from the map of Europe as long as the Jews remain away. Where shall these Jews go? Not all will be both able and willing to settle in Palestine. From their point of view, leaving Europe is the important thing. But, says the old-line Zionist, we can't take the Jews elsewhere, even if they would be accepted, because anti-Semitism would either increase in those places or would spring up if it were not yet present. Our experience tells us that this view is correct, and therefore, it is important for all Zionists to remember that there will be Jews living outside of Palestine for as far into the future as we can see. And while anti-Semitism will not directly affect the Jews of Palestine and will probably be adequately dealt with if it springs up among the other inhabitants of a Jewish state, the very existence of a Jewish Palestine may serve to accentuate the anti-Semitism already prevalent in the Diaspora.

For let us reckon with the following eventuality. There is a strong possibility that the forces of reaction are not being completely subdued by the conflict now in progress and that they are gathering themselves for a new assault after the war. Governments are showing signs of a surge towards a new era of imperialism and the local populations are exhibiting many evidences of continuing the traditional bigotries or of having fallen prey to the insidious propaganda of Hitler. Here in America, anti-Semitism and anti-Negro feeling, far from having abated, are becoming more open and in many cases more intense. Anti-Semitism, it is admitted by all, is often a concomitant of reaction. What then is likely to be the result of an effective Zionist movement? Most Zionists, including General Zionists, take pride in the social achievements of the *yishuv,* which are the products of some very radical procedures in social experimentation. They point to the cooperative Commonwealth now emerging and declare it to be an example for all mankind. We thus become identified, in our own eyes and in the eyes of our neighbors, with a great liberal movement. Should the end of the war bring in its wake a wave of reaction, which is not unlikely, we should then be associated, by our own admission, with everything to which reaction is opposed. Will a liberal democratic state in Palestine, to which we pledge our cultural adherence help to remove anti-Semitism, which in essence is anti-liberal and anti-Democratic?

Nevertheless, in spite of such conjectures, we must stick to our guns. For it is of extreme importance for all Jews to realize that the abolition of anti-Semitism and the ultimate success of Zionism itself depend on the advances made by progressive forces throughout the world. Naturally, liberalism must always expect a counter-attack by reaction. Therefore, our support of Zionism as a progressive movement must not falter even though it may bring in its wake an increase in anti-Jewish bigotry. If we choose as our vocation leading the world to a higher morality then we must be ready to bear the assaults of those who would stand in its way.

Will Zionism "Normalize" Jewish Life?

As to the second argument that Zionism will normalize Jewish life, there is a sense in which this argument has some validity. The economic maladjustment of

the Jew may be somewhat relieved, if those Jews who find themselves the victims of anti-Jewish economic discrimination in their respective occupations may migrate to Palestine. That would at least solve their personal problems and it might also, by relieving the pressure of competition which intensifies anti-Semitism, facilitate the spread of more liberal attitudes toward Jews. Moreover there is no denying the psychologically normalizing influence of Zionism on the Jew, its therapeutic value in enhancing his self-respect and healing the psychic wounds that anti-Semitism inflicts upon him. The consciousness that he belongs to a people which is producing a dynamic and diversified culture derived, like every other culture, from the process of exploiting natural resources for the satisfaction of human needs must give dignity and poise to Jewish personality and may even, in some small degree, command for the Jew a greater measure of respect from non-Jews.

But most Zionists when they talk of the normalizing effect of Zionism mean something else by it, and make claims for it that are easily controvertible. They contend that by being established on its own soil, the Jewish people would become like all the nations of the world. There would thus be removed the basic cause of anti-Semitism, the mysterious nature of the Jewish people. But in advancing that argument they lose sight of the fact that most Jews and surely most Zionists intend Jewish life to continue wherever Jews may live. This is an integral part of our national philosophy. Rabbi Silver errs in comparing the Jewish people to the British, French, and German. It is true that the nationals of many countries do not live in their homelands. In some cases they may even have maintained a minimum of their cultural heritages in their new lands. But none of the "normal" nations has a traditional national policy of long standing which calls for maintaining among its nationals abroad almost every aspect of their national civilization. Only the Jewish people has adopted this as part of its collective thinking. We intend to keep alive our common religion, language, community, organizations, folkways, art, etc., and to insure their perpetuation by a system of education. Is there any other nationality with a similar program? If resemblance to other nations is what we mean by normalization, Zionism normalizes Jewish life only from the point of view of those who accept the philosophy of *shelilat hagalut* (negation of a Jewish future in the Diaspora). If their counsels prevailed, we would indeed be like other nations. We would have a homeland of our own and no serious effort would be made to preserve in the Diaspora the numerous aspects of Judaism now being practiced.

History may compel the ultimate disappearance of Judaism in the Diaspora, but only a handful of Zionists work under the supposition that it must. The overwhelming majority of Zionists are Jews who want to see Judaism continue outside of Palestine as well as in the homeland. How then does Zionism normalize Jewish life? For those Jews who enter Palestine, the answer is simple. They will live as Jews politically, socially, economically, religiously, etc. But even this normalization of their lives is disturbed by contacts which they will continue to have with their fellow Jews throughout the world. And it is these contacts and shared experiences which will render it impossible for Zionism to normalize Jewish life in the sense of making it resemble the life of the non-Jewish world. On the contrary, Zionism will accentuate the already existent peculiarity of Judaism and the Jewish people.

Should "Normalcy" Be Our Ideal?

Far from being a deterrent to the Zionist movement, however, this accentuation should be held forth as an incentive. Normalcy is a term which has drab connotations To be normal means to move along with the crowd, to be possessed of the extremes neither of dullness nor of genius. In this sense, we have prided ourselves as a people on a singular lack of normalcy. We accepted no mediocre ideal of morality and we delegated to ourselves no ordinary responsibility in carrying out its precepts. It would have been a normal thing for us to disappear when we were driven from our homeland. Ten of our tribes did. But the creative kernel of our people preferred to be abnormal. And it still is. It is attempting to establish a new pattern of human association, contained in the concept of cultural nationalism. To the extent that Jewish life will provide unique concrete manifestations of this concept, to that extent will Zionism fail to normalize our lives.

We should prefer not to remain an abnormal entity. We should like other peoples as well as our own to develop their civilizations wherever groups of them live away from their homeland. That would mean a universal system of cultural pluralism. But at the moment this is a hope for the distant future.

Up to the present time, we have been somewhat of a mystery to the world. And being a mystery, our stubborn existence has been "one of those things." Explanations, of course, have been offered and some of them have helped to lead the non-Jew into believing he understood the nature of the mystery. With an interpretation of the Jew at hand he often ceased to worry about us. Thus we Jews were a religious group and our presence could be explained in the same way as that of the Catholics, Protestants and other religions. Others account for our survival on the theory that Judaism has lived because the Jews have been oppressed. Give democracy a chance to work, they contend, and Jewry will disappear.

Along comes Zionism and destroys all these fine, logical explanations. With democracy spread through the world, with the Jews in possession of their own homeland, the Jewish people would still assert its right and its will to live, even in the Diaspora. How are non-Jews to explain this new phenomenon? Judaism can then certainly not be defined as a religion, for its other aspects of language, literature, music, art, social philosophy, etc., will become clear for all to see. And the preservative influence of Palestine on the Diaspora will negate the sensible theory that Jews will disappear with the disappearance of oppression. They will become the only people on the face of the earth with a national center, and with a thriving, pulsating periphery of singular nature in almost every region of the world. Perhaps this picture of thriving Diaspora Judaism is a dream. If so, then Zionism will normalize Jewish life, because, as stated above, we lose our distinctive pattern. But if the future development of Palestine and the opportunities for group survival in democratic lands bring about a strengthening of Jewish consciousness, then Zionism will serve as a new factor in accentuating the unique character of Jewish civilization. And this is our hope. For most Zionists see in Palestine the means of reinforcing Jewish unity, creating new forms and content for the Jewish religion and adding new body to Hebrew culture in the Diaspora.

Zionism As a Means of Preserving Judaism

If the above thesis is correct Zionism, to all intents and purposes, is irrelevant to the removal of anti-Semitism in the Diaspora. There are too many other factors involved for this simple monistic cure. But if it is not an answer to anti-Semitism and

will not normalize Jewish life, what purpose does it serve? It serves the purpose of preserving Jewish life and laying the basis for a vigorous new Jewish culture. In Palestine itself there is no question as to the role of Zionism. There Jews are assuring themselves of a Jewish group life, are developing even now new and daring social forms and are setting out on new paths in art, literature and music.

But for the Jews of the Diaspora, Zionism offers something entirely different—a challenge to the strength and uniqueness of the Jewish heritage. Jewish life has continued through centuries of exile because of the interplay of two forces, oppression and the inner vitality of the Jewish community. It has become commonplace to speak of the role of oppression in preserving the Jewish people, but not enough stress has been placed on the positive factors which made possible not only its continuance but its growth as well. Judaism's own strength was an important factor in its survival. It had a system of observances which bound the Jewish group together with bonds of habit. It possessed a rich culture which gave warmth to the Jewish soul. And it had a future and a purpose, superior (in the minds of the Jew) to those of any other group—the fulfillment of God's promise announced in His revelation to the ancient Israelites.

In the 18th and 19th centuries emancipation led to a removal of much of the external pressure which forced Jews together. Concomitantly, there arose a new world outlook, which some choose to call secular. This combination has weakened the basis of Jewish life. With the absence of oppression, it might have continued to flourish if it had preserved the same inner strength which had enabled it to flower in the Golden Age in Spain. But that strength is now lacking, having been undermined by the revolution in human thought. In 11th century Spain Judaism had as valid a foundation as any of the surrounding cultures. It had a revealed truth with which it could match other systems of revelation. To be a Jew one did not have to enter into mental gymnastics to justify one's way of life. But today it is no longer possible to satisfy the Jew by pointing to God's revelation at Sinai. The supernaturalist foundations of his group life have crumbled and have been replaced by a naturalistic explanation. Thus with the compulsion of supernaturalism having disappeared, the entire structure of Jewish religio-national life has lost its firmness. The structural bricks of the past must be replaced by new ones.

It is only with the help of Zionism that Judaism can hope to regain its inner strength of the past. For it is only Zionism which can give body to the religio-national character of the Jewish people. Future Jewish life in the Diaspora will undoubtedly be built around the Jewish religion. But Judaism is wholly dependent on the functioning of the Jewish community. When the Jews were confined to the ghetto they lacked few characteristics of nationhood except direct contact with the soil and freedom of movement. They were largely autonomous in their own daily association and their religious ideals were embodied in law and social forms. Thus Jewish life was not departmentalized into economic, social and religious spheres. All were organically related. Today this no longer holds true. The Jewish religion in America is living on the momentum of the past and finds little opportunity to develop, because it has no national structure in which it can make itself concrete and which in turn can help to reinvigorate it with new forms and new content. Only in a land where Jews live as Jews politically, socially, and economically, as well as religiously, can the Jewish religion once again descend from the heights of platitudinous phraseology and

become imbedded in the fertile soil of social legislation and asthetic ceremonial. One has only to observe the enhanced meaning of the Jewish ideals of social justice which has resulted from Jewish experimentation in Palestine to see the tremendous uplift that Eretz Yisrael has already given Jewish religion in the U. S. Even without the initiative of Zionists (something they should have made every effort to exercise) the synagogue has already been greatly influenced by Zionism. New meaning has been infused into prayers for Zion, sermons have been fired with a new hope and a new idealism, and the possibility of a more significant observance of the festivals has been shown to us in the Palestinian celebration of Pesah, Shavuot, Sukkot, etc. American Jewish religion is vicariously reaping the benefit of the transplantation of the Jewish people to the soil of Palestine. It is important that we emphasize, for the benefit of the American Council for Judaism and their ilk that the Jewish religion is deriving most benefit in America from the achievements of Jewish nationalism. And conversely, in Palestine, perhaps more than any country in the world, the social ideals of the Jewish religion are being most successfully put into practice.

Zionism is needed, secondly, to insure the continued development of Hebrew culture without which Judaism is inconceivable. A great portion of the strength of the Hebrew movement is dependent on the degree of its contact with the literature and art of modern Palestine. This contact has already made itself felt in native American Hebrew literary and art movements and will prove even more fruitful as Palestine assumes a more significant role in the sphere of world culture. Without Palestine, of course, either as a dream of the future or a reality of the present, Hebrew has little opportunity for growth in the Diaspora. And what applies to the Hebrew language is applicable in equal measure to Hebraic art.

Thirdly, Zionism can serve and has served to awaken the dormant group consciousness of the Jewish people. In times of stress anti-Semitism has served this function, but in peace time only such a movement as Zionism can avail to arouse in the Jewish masses a desire to remain a part of the Jewish people.

Our insistence on the preservation of Judaism, rather than the abolition or mitigation of anti-Semitism as motive for Zionism is no academic matter. It touches at the very root of the failure of Zionist propaganda among the masses of non-Jews. By stressing Palestine merely as a home for foreign Jews who are suffering at the hands of tyrants, we remove all possibility of infusing meaning into Zionist philosophy in a world of peace and security. Zionism does not stand or fall on the relative amount of persecution of world Jewry. It is rather a movement necessary to insure future cultural and religious contributions of the Jewish people in a democratic world. If Zionist propaganda will concentrate on this ideology, it will not only be truer to Zionism but will serve as a more effective educational instrument in instructing both Jews and non-Jews about the nature of the religious civilization of the Jewish people.

The Jewish Community and the Serviceman

By JACOB M. OTT

THAT the religiousness of the Jewish men and women in the Armed Forces as measured by chapel attendance and participation in the program revolving about the chapel is more intense and vaster in scope for that group than the parallel situation in civilian life has been the subject of much discussion and report. The work of the chaplain in this regard as rabbi, friend and counselor has also received more than passing notice. The National Jewish Welfare Board, in gathering reports from chaplains, workers and special observers all over the nation and overseas, has labored hard and productively to disseminate this information through its own organs of publication, the *JWB Sentinel* and the *Jewish Chaplain,* and through its efficient public relations staff.

Providing Comforts Not Enough

Corresponding in breadth and degree to this resurgence of the religious spirit on the part of servicemen has been the marked growth of a sense of awareness in the Jewish communities in America. The horrible truth of the Jewish position in Europe, the disquieting thought that the cancer of hate was becoming more malignant, plus the sudden presence of troops of Jewish faith in their midst, caused American Jews to amalgamate their forces in joint endeavor as far as the prosecution of the war is concerned. In places where there were already strong Jewish communities with distinct religious, cultural, educational and recreational programs, the appearance of servicemen in nearby military cantonments and naval stations offered a challenge to plan anew, elaborate and augment the pre-war setup. Men and women never before considered active members of the community voluntarily prosecuted their efforts with exceptional vigor and understanding. The arid areas of Judaism, those cultural wastes where Jews lived without Judaism or with the most meager vestiges of Judaism, and those small, isolated families residing on the peripheries of large metropolitan areas rose to the call, flourished, and accomplished yeoman work. In my experience, the sparse population of Columbus, Indiana (12 Jewish families in all) regarded the 83rd Division Chapel at Camp Atterbury, Indiana as their synagogue, and the Jewish soldiers and Wacs as their neighbors and fellow congregants. To the latter, those families constituted their home people. The processes of birth, growth and rejuvenation have characterized the Jewish communities in wartime. Their record has been an unselfish, lustrous one, worthy of separate and lengthy account.

The entire emphasis in the new program was founded on the desire to serve the servicemen in every possible manner. The attitude toward "service" is proper and admirable, and it is being effectively expressed. But it is a very short-sighted view. The techniques adopted are doubtless sufficient to achieve the accepted objectives. If the cardinal objective is to provide comfort for servicemen and cater to their wants, then all is fine. The deed is done. But do we aspire to such limited aims? Is our vision so myopic that we cannot see beyond these immediate objectives?

Looking Forward to Demobilization

With the crescendo of military victories rising steadily on the world's battlefronts, with the populations of the United Na-

tions waiting expectantly for the terms of the Cairo and Teheran agreements to be executed, with the vastness of the holocaust increasing daily, we envision at some future date the return to peace (even though only in the negative sense of the absence of organized war) and to what might questionably be called the normal pursuits of life.

On that day our young men and women will come home. Their return will present a problem to the Jewish community, which must be faced and acted upon, if the community is not to disappear out of sheer atrophy. What we choose to do about it depends wholly upon our reexamination of the total problem and our erection of a higher ideal—the ideal of a positive, integrated Jewish community as an expression of Jewish will and purpose. If we recognize the fact that the war does not end with the unconditional surrender of the Fascist nations but must continue, though in less violent form, against the base abominations of our society, then we cannot permit the newly infused spirit bred in the midst of war to breathe its last. If we demand that the world emerge from abysmal darkness after the war and lift its eyes toward the light of an affirmative social ideal, we must also impress on our Jewish communities the virtue of our affirmative Jewish ideal. Here is the incentive that can inspire a new, reconstructive, assertive spirit in the home, the synagogue, the center and community.

The time to act is *now*. To plan *now* will not disturb or reduce the present work, but will lay the foundation for a better Jewish community and an enhanced Jewish destiny. Steps should be taken by the Jewish communities *now* to prepare for the demobilization of the military and their remobilization for participation in community life. This has not been done. What is more alarming is that it is apparently not even being seriously considered. Very few instances appear, at least in my chaplaincy career of fifteen months and in the experiences of numerous chaplains with whom I have discussed the matter, in which there is an effective liaison between the community—with the synagogue and temple as nuclei—and the chaplain and local soldiers. The rabbis have in this phase proved sorely remiss, especially when it comes to dealing with the Army rabbi. If you want a "meeting place," a house of worship and a centre of cultural advancement attended by your children, exert the effort now. Do not wait.

As most often is the case, the exposition of a problem is always more facile than its solution. Assault and criticism are irresponsible unless constructive remedial methods are suggested. Three basic phases are involved in the transition from the military community to the civilian. Two are elements of preparation; the third is consummation. They are: (1) religious and communal relationship within the military sphere; (2) a quadrangular relationship and intercourse between synagogue, parents, chaplain and soldier, with the emphasis on the synagogue (rabbi as executive) and the serviceman; and (3) the reception of the war veteran upon his return and his subsequent readjustment to the pace and environment of the neighborhood.

Maintaining Community Contacts

The first of the preparatory stages is now being ably carried out by chaplains, JWB representatives and by the Committee on Army and Navy Religious Activities operating under the aegis of the National Jewish Welfare Board.

The second phase of the problem, intercommunication, was called to the attention of the JWB Committee on Army

and Navy Religious Activities as part of a chaplain's monthly report by the writer in February, 1943. The Lutheran system involving both the National Lutheran Council, with offices in Minneapolis, and the National Lutheran Council—Missouri Synod, functioning out of Chicago, was described by way of example and suggestion. This system depends for its efficacy upon the close cooperation of home ministers and parents in keeping the Council, and the chaplains through the Council, informed as to the military locations of their congregants and sons. These names are submitted to a Central Army-Navy Commission, where they are filed alphabetically by states, units and camps. The names of the parents are also kept on file in a like manner. The soldier, home minister and parents are requested to report changes of address as they occur. Monthly the Council sends to each man a devotional leaflet and a humorous publication entitled "At Ease." Home ministers are urged and encouraged to send congregational "round-robin" letters, personal letters, church bulletins and the like to servicemen. Whenever a Lutheran soldier enters a camp, the Lutheran chaplain is informed of the fact. He is given all the information concerning the man and he goes forth to meet with him and keep the chain unbroken. The system has functioned for three years, boasts a file of thousands of men. It was recommended last year by the Chief of Chaplains to Presbyterian and Episcopal church commissions at a conclave in Washington, D. C.

Rabbi Philip Goodman of CANRA submitted this report to Dr. Samuel Kohs, Director of the JWB Bureau of War Records, for comment. Dr. Kohs opined that "if the Jews functioned like the Lutherans, we could duplicate their achievement." He added, however, that "it would be very helpful if we could make this problem a topic for discussion at some meeting when we can get our feet under the table to analyze and deal with such questions." The Metropolitan areas of New York and Philadelphia had groups of Jewish men assembled in Jewish Community Centers for the purpose of securing information about immediate destintions so that chaplains and JWB workers could be notified of the prospective arrivals. But this system failed when men moved on to new assignments at more permanent stations and did not report such changes. Dr. Kohs remarked that unless every Jewish man communicated with the War Records Committee, changes could not be noted. In a surprising number of instances soldiers did not tell their own parents of these changes. This census is a means to further the gigantic task assumed by the Bureau of War Records. Cooperation with this agency would assure the means of contact between community and camp or battlefield.

The weak link in the Lutheran system (one chaplain rated the system despite the weakness as 80-85 per cent efficient) remains the home minister. We can make the rabbi and synagogue a strong link. It is not enough to represent a soldier as a star on a temple service flag, or to post his name on a corner honor roll. Personal letters, bulletins, periodic greetings, all make the soldier feel that not only his parents but the whole community await his return. I know that the man who has this contact derives a great measure of satisfaction and pride out of it. Some men make it a habit to give me every such communication they receive and indulge in boasting about the "good old days." Tell them what goes on at home. Let them know that there is a place and responsibility awaiting them, that they owe it to themselves and to their people to keep the parents or the rabbi or the

Bureau of War Records informed of their whereabouts. Describe to them the war activities of the community, the problems being encountered and how they are being solved, and all other interesting activities. Remember that the war is the center of their life. Tell them about their comrades from home who are on other fronts. In a word, keep the spirit of home alive in them. Occasionally, a personal letter from the rabbi demonstrating sincere interest in their welfare will be very welcome. There is no reason why we cannot function as the Lutherans do, and even better. But it involves individual and communal responsibility, and the knowledge of why it is important that the plan be executed.

The Reentrance of the Returning Servicemen into the Community

Third, and in the final analysis, perhaps most crucial, is the return home, the reentrance into the community. Training Manual 16-205, "The Chaplain," published by the War Department, outlines the suggested type of letter which should accompany a soldier upon his discharge from the service, and which should be presented to the home pastor. One sentence is exceedingly well put. It reads: "He is, however, in this transitional state from a military life to that of a civilian, in a particularly fluid state of mind when he will respond more readily to tactful and wise guidance." The chaplain will perform his task in urging the soldier to see his rabbi, in framing a personal letter of introduction for him, so that when the homeward journey is finished he may profit from his spiritual leader's counsel. It matters not if he has never before attended the synagogue at home or if he does not know the home rabbi. He is not the same man who left the community when the conflict first came.

But the rabbi, on the other hand, must devote himself as never before to purely pastoral activities. He must interview the men, give them words of guidance, discuss with them freely their new problems and enlist the support of others in assisting them. If the men do not come to him, he must go to them. This is a living ministry, warm and rewarding. The rabbi must aid the community in forming special organizations for war veterans, presenting such organizations with well-defined tasks and responsibilities within the community. The returning veterans must now be given a sense of "civilian community awareness." They cannot give up so easily their identification with the miiltary, and so must function with others who have the same recent background. Futher, adult education should be provided in Jewish subjects. This movement in the army proved surprisingly successful. Initial failure should not be regarded as ground for abandonment of the project. The road is not without barriers. It is a tortuous route. But these men and women should be mobilized in the continuing struggle for a real peace. Therefore, *the community dare not demobilize.*

At a time when men speak of world reorganization and unified structures, it must not be considered clannish and narrow to discuss an integrated Jewish community. It is not a manifestation of a ghetto mind. Of all peoples, we are perhaps most aware of the universal issues at stake. Our traditions, teachings and culture have always been pointed to these ends. The right of man to work gainfully and without obstructions raised by prejudice, to earn his daily bread and to keep his family and person secure must be achieved. So must the right for free self-expression. But we can make our best contribution to these causes through an affirmative, all-inclusive Jewish community.

By acting in concert, Jews can simultaneously advance the common destiny of all good and moral men, and the specific collective interests of the Jewish people.

Book Notes

UNDER COVER, John Roy Carlson, Dutton, New York, 1943.
SEE WHAT I MEAN?, Lewis Browne, Random House, New York, 1943.

JOHN ROY CARLSON'S *Under Cover* has enjoyed a degree of popular success attained by few works of non-fiction. For almost a year (it was finished in April and published in June, 1943) it has been steadily at the top of the list in reading popularity in almost every city sampled. The evaluation on its jacket guarantees sensational material: "Unabridged and unexpurgated" . . . "my four years in the Nazi underworld of America" . . . "amazing revelation." The blurbs on the inside of the jacket quote from reviews in the New York *Times* and *Herald Tribune,* the Philadelphia *Inquirer,* the Chicago *Daily News,* and from statements by Rex Stout, Clifton Fadiman, Walter Winchell, Carl Van Doren, Louis Adamic, and others who say that this is *the* book America must read to find out what the score is.

But this book is utterly without literary merit or grace. It's "amazing revelations" are for the most part artificial and clumsy, like the atmosphere of suspense in a botched-up, amateurish murder mystery. The author styles himself an "investigator" and his reporting even of open, public meetings as "investigations." He describes the scowls and evil gestures and hushed confidences of the subjects of his "investigations" in fine, sophomoric writing. I must say that he strikes me as a naive person, who would be a toy in the hands of trained spies. See, for example, his reactions to Pearl Harbor:

"Like most Americans, I thought that, with Pearl Harbor, we had become a united nation. I believed that my 'friends' would now become true patriots, stop their disruptive propaganda and back up the Congress and the nation in the prosecution of the war. Feeling sure that my work as investigator was over, I thought of enlisting in order to continue my fight aganist Axis aggression.

" I realized with a shock that my work was far from finished. Instead of burying their past agitations and joining the rest of America in a united stand against Nazi aggression, my 'patriotic pals' were going to continue their role as transmission-belters of Nazi propaganda!" (Page 263)

In brief, to this reviewer the whole book does not ring true as an *investigation.* Carlson is always "deciding" or "determining" to do something as bold as to write a letter to somebody or other. He concludes his chapters at times with neat, prophetic summaries, at times with an awkward attempt at suspense of the "to be continued in our next episode" variety of movie-serial thrillers. He goes on for over 500 pages, though the material could well stand editing down to about 200. He states in his preface that he started to work with a collaborator, "but after a few weeks we parted company." Too bad; for the book is disorganized, without significant analyses or comments, and in style clumsy, even puerile.

One must conclude, then, that the reason the book had so wide a circulation was the material in it, the exposé of unknown and secret *undercover* organizations. But I doubt if Carlson has uncovered, in this book, any single person, organization, fact, publishing house, propaganda channel, or piece of propaganda not previously known to the F.B.I., and to half a dozen or more Jewish and nonsectarian organizations engaged in defense

against incipient fascism in this country. Possibly he himself, as he continuously implies, delivered much of his material to some of them. The fact is, however, that most of his material, including the "sensational" naming of Senators, Congressmen, industrialists, and other leaders of public opinion could have been compiled in more orderly and more readable fashion by any good research student sitting down with newspaper files and a pile of openly published and widely circulated books and pamphlets.

All that Carlson added was his personal impressions of some public figures, gained from personal interviews, and of some less-known would-be *gauleiters,* gained from hanging around with them, incognito. Now this, as Carlson states, may have been dangerous to Carlson personally, and I have no reason to disbelieve that it was. But the fact is that it is much more important to have *Mein Kampf* on my desk to study, than to know whether Hitler's hands are flabby or firm and whether his voice is strident or mellifluous. More important than that, is the question whether we have half, or a tenth, of the story of what goes on, Carlson's characters, though by no means innocuous, are definitely not the Quislings and Otto Abetzes. Carlson points out that all his "patriots," with one exception, complained of lack of funds. We may be sure that neither Quisling nor Abetz suffered for lack of money. My uncomfortable suspicion is that the big shots of the Nazi underworld in America are still under cover, that they do not lack for funds, that they uncovered Carlson long ago and decided he was not dangerous to them, and that they are laughing at him and the American public avidly consuming his small-fry catch.

Now all of this does not mean to say or imply that *Under Cover* is worthless or that enthusiastic reviewers are imbeciles. It does mean to point out that, although the book was poorly put together, although it is mildly sensational but essentially shallow, it nevertheless won a tremendous reception from the American reading public. And the reasons bear, as Carlson would put it, "investigation."

Why the unprecedented sales of *Under Cover?* The point is that this book presents for the first time, *available to the general public,* a list of a large number of the known lunatic fringe "patriots," a description of their propaganda line, and their interconnections. Any number of organizations had this information. But Carlson *printed* it—and here lies the value of the book. For the American public wanted to know about their potential enemies within. My guess is that there has been much chagrin, gnashing of teeth, and beating of breasts in the inner offices of some of our defense organizations: "Why didn't *we* print this stuff?"

My impressions of *Under Cover* and the whole situation of the desire for information on American fascism are borne out, incidentally, by the undeserved success, though temporary, of Lewis Browne's novel *See What I Mean?* "a novel based on facts, dealing with the subversive movements which menace our society." Here is a novel which aims to tell the origin and methods of native fascist organizations, what kind of people their leaders are, what kind of people their followers are, how they operate. Browne takes the trouble to say that he had become disturbed over "the inroads that have been made in the American mind by fascist propaganda." He wrote his novel after "examining a small mountain of dictograph notes and other undercover material on various subversive organizations." Yet his novel, which became a temporary best-seller, is a flippant, superficial, empty story, devoid of significance as the study of fascism it purports to be.

Browne writes an engaging and clever story, in his annoying way ("though never unfrocked I was always unsuited for the ministry"); but either he did not grasp the significance of the material he examined, or did not transmit it, or there was not any there to begin with. As a study of fascist method, *It Can't Happen Here* and the first few paragraphs of *The Moon Is Down* say much more than *See What I Mean?* Yet Browne's book, too, sold well.

I gather from all this that Americans want to know what's what and that Jews, fascism's first target, want to know what's what. There are clear implications here for Jewish defense organizations and their methods. Whether Jewish self-defense organizations can or cannot accomplish anything substantial against anti-Semitism is another question. But so long as they exist and we do support them, let us recognize that Jews are tired of the mystery and the air of sensational but ineffable discoveries that surround so much of what passes for Jewish self-defense. It seems to me that we have to believe what we have been saying so long, that as a minority we stand or fall with the advancement or decline of democracy. Then let us get out into the free air of public opinion. I can see that publication of names and places and statements might make the people who bear the names and make the statements love Jews less and not more, and maybe even excite some others to like us less. But I cannot see how the busy policy of collecting facts and refusing to publish them can get us anywhere in the long run. If we wait too long to muster up courage to jump the stream, it may be a river by the time we are ready. If Asser Levy in the 1650's had not insisted on his right to live in New Amsterdam and serve in the militia like everyone else, Jews might still be third-class citizens of this country. If Levy had contented himself with collecting files of all the unpleasant things Peter Stuyvesant said about Jews, he might have amassed a large heritage for his descendants to contribute to the waste paper drive; but his status would not have been legalized or secure.

I am not advocating blatant, flamboyant shouting from the house-tops. But there must be a sensible and forthright medium somewhere between secrecy and flamboyancy.

MYER S. KRIPKE

Music Notes

By JUDITH K. EISENSTEIN

LAST week a concert was held in Town Hall, New York, to honor the memory of Joseph Achron, whose death, a year ago, ended a career which represented a brief but highly significant era in the history of Jewish music. The concert, consisting of chamber and violin music by this noted composer, seemed to this listener very nearly to epitomize that era. We say "very nearly" because, in the absence from the program of Achron's songs, one element was missing to round out the story. The era of which we speak is, of course, that of the Russo-Jewish nationalist movement, which was the first to attempt to create a national Jewish music.

We cannot point to any new movement which has yet crystallized to succeed it. There are isolated individuals who are still completely under its influence. There are equally isolated individuals who seem

to be doing new things. We feel, in moments of optimism, that we are in a transitional period, and that a new era is about to be born. If such a new era should come, it will undoubtedly owe a great deal to that group of pioneers who had to grope and experiment, who had to select and reject raw material, and who had to hew out of their own souls the very elementary forms which would be Jewish art music.

Probably the most profound musician of the group was Achron. In his music, as we heard it at the memorial concert, were clearly to be discerned all the groping and experimentation. There were both the finest flowering and the failures of the whole movement.

In the violin selections, played with much vibrato and sentiment by Michel Piastro, we heard the first experiments of a talented youth, who witnessed the growth of a Russian national music, and who hoped to see a similar development in a Jewish national music. These were pleasant, melodious pieces based directly on Hasidic song, elaborated with the fullest technical use of the resources of both violin and piano, and reflecting very clearly the influence of the young man's teachers, one of whom was Rimsky-Korsakoff. There was no mistaking the Jewishness of the music. It was clearly Jewish folklore, retold with artistry and elegance.

The "Children's Suite" for string quartet (the Bennington string quartet), clarinet (Simeon Bellison), and piano (Edward Steuermann) had an unusually skillful performance. In this music we heard the maturing of Achron's technical powers: brilliant instrumentation, clever contrapuntal writing, and a greatly increased modernism in both harmony and rhythm. We heard a new selection of thematic material and a more creative use of it. Achron had found the songs of the Ghetto lacking in originality, and in dynamic potentialities. He turned to the more elemental Biblical chants, which were both more uniquely Jewish, and more readily fragmentized into germs of musical ideas. The "Children's Suite," built up out of these fragments, is charming, amusing, tender and touching, but strangely enough we did not find it Jewish. We wondered whether there were any Jewish children in the world who would feel that it spoke for them. Certainly not in America. And in Palestine the children would feel equally strange to it. As for the children of the European ghetto, who may have learned the Biblical chants—they and their parents would have very definite associations with those chants, hallowed associations which would be totally irrelevant to hobby horses and mechanical dolls and monkeys (if they had any idea what those things were). These associations would, indeed, be desecrated by such application. Theoretically Achron was creating the parallel of a later development in national music of other countries. Moussorgski wrote children's songs which were not folkloristic, but which had their roots deep in Russian chant. Debussy used fragments of French song which had nourished generations of French children. The trouble with Achron was that, while his theory was sound enough, his "Jewish Children" were only theoretical.

In the two selections for string quartet which, as a matter of fact, opened the evening, and in the Concerto for Piano Solo which followed, we heard the last developments in Achron's music. We must state here that we were agape with admiration at the performances of the Bennington String Quartet and Mr. Steuermann, respectively. No mere human limitations seemed to have daunted the composer, and neither did they daunt these intrepid artists. The Elegy, and the Dance and Phantasm from the Sinfonietta

seemed still to have some references to the ancient chant. We are not sure, and this single hearing was not adequate for our own very definite limitations. It was necessary for us to exercise terrific concentration to grasp the whole musical meaning, for this was music of most extreme and intellectualized modernism. While there were moments of lucid beauty in the Elegy, and moments of excitement in the Dance, the total effect was only of marvellous ingenuity. The piano concerto, played thus posthumously for the first time in public, was beyond our comprehension entirely.

To us, this music represented the ebbing out of the heart's blood of a generation. Non-Jew and Jew alike, painter and composer and writer alike, of a generation that had lost faith in humanity and attachment to a land, produced pictures and poems and musical compositions such as these, in which only they themselves and a small coterie of similarly disillusioned laymen could ever be interested. In the non-Jewish world, a younger generation, inheriting from them their hard-won technical advances, is beginning to create a still newer music. The Bohemian quarters of the world have disappeared and the young creative artist is living in his own town, with his own family and his own people, if he is not at the moment fighting and dying for them. He is frankly and unashamedly trying to build morale, the morale of the plain people. A new generation of Jewish composers will have men like Achron upon whom to draw for the technical skills on which to build a people's music.

RECONSTRUCTIONISM IN THIS ISSUE

Reconstructionism, in its relation to Zionism, has always stressed a particular viewpoint. Its attitude conforms with its conception of Judaism as an evolving religious civilization with its center in Palestine. It rejects the notion that Judaism can dispense with Palestine and survive without a national home. It regards the upbuilding of Palestine as the main integrating force in Jewish life today. At the same time, it affirms the possibility and desirability of maintaining Judaism wherever Jews live, though it regards that possibility as contingent on continued interest in Palestine and its rehabilitation as the national home of the Jewish civilization. Our hope and endeavor should be to enable Judaism to function as a complete civilization with its own autonomous political, social and cultural institutions and, to that end we support the program for a Jewish Commonwealth.

But many Zionists who have not thought through the problem of Jewish life look to Zionism not for insuring the survival and growth of Judaism as a civilization, but for solving the problem of anti-Semitism. The inadequacy of that approach is the main point of Rabbi Cohen's paper in this issue, "Zionism for Jews or Judaism," which advocates the Reconstructionist approach to the problem.

* * *

In the Diaspora, Reconstructionism advocates the establishment of voluntary community organizations which will assume a maximum responsibility for helping Jews to live a life of self-fulfilment. The establishment of such communities is a slow process of evolution, but that process is aided whenever we try, in an organized way, to help Jews meet some of the personal problems that confront them. Chaplain Ott's appeal in this issue for Jewish community aid to the servicemen during and after the war is therefore one in which Reconstructionists should be interested. The integration of these men into the general and the Jewish community carries out a principle of Reconstructionism which might be formulated as follows: If the individual Jew is not to be frustrated, he needs the backing of a Jewish community; if the Jewish community is to survive, it must make itself indispensable to individual Jews.

* * *

The fact that Reconstructionism does not expect Zionism to abolish anti-Semitism does not imply a lack of concern with that problem. We view anti-Semitism as one of those problems of social ethics which can only be solved by the establishment of a just and democratic social order everywhere. By its emphasis on the religious character of Jewish civilization, Reconstructionism maintains that it is the duty of Jews, collectively as well as individually, to participate in all democratic liberalizing movements. Hence the Reconstructionist interest in publishing reviews of books like "Under Cover" and "See What I Mean?" which have a bearing on the future of democracy in America.